

Gasoline Rally #2, June 26-28, 2009



June 18th: Some Days it Pans Out

The weather looked pretty bad today, but I made it to work without a stopover to pull on rain gear! The HR lady just told me that the storms look to have gone away, and the skies are clear! BONUS! I may go for a short ride on the way home. The kids are having a sleepover/play date at a friend's house so I have the extra night off. I have to stop at the optometrist on the way home...somehow I lost one of the nose pads on my sunglasses and I have to get that fixed this week.

I have an awesome friend who is a real tech-mech guy. He's got a garage full of tools, air compressor, etc. He helped me a LOT last year keeping the Chinese scoot running good. I don't know if I'll be able to repay him fully...such a cool mofo. Anyway, he's gonna tune up some stuff on his scoot this weekend, so he said I could come over with my parts and fluids and we'll tackle the oil change and sparkplug change. It has to be done before Gasoline Rally next week. I called Yamaha Louisville and they said my oil filter (the Roketa did not take an oil filter!) runs between \$12 and \$15. The guy I spoke to said if they try to charge me like \$50 then I need to ask for him!! Damned right I will! I'm going over to comparable full synthetic oil this time. Last time at the 600 mile interval they used Yamalube (which I figure is recommended--duh!) but I want synth to keep the life of the engine safe...I have been stretching my service out a little due to scarcity of time and money.

The next big expense will be a rear tire. I'm gonna likely go to Derby Cycle in Shelbyville to get that done. They also have a set of saddlebags I want, but that will have to wait....

June 20th: Pre-Rally Weekend

Saturday I went and did errands. I went first to Yamaha of Louisville to get the stuff I needed for my 'tune up' this weekend. I got 2 quarts semi-synth Yamalube, an oil filter, and a new NKG plug. My service was past due and I have been getting antsy about it. After seeing that full-synth was \$19.99 and blend was \$10.99, I will use automotive from here on out. That is just plain simple math. Full synth auto (same rating 10w50 is what they gave me) is like \$6 per quart. I did feel stupid...



On the way back I rode over to Cycle Gear to look around and really didn't need anything. They still managed to sell me some plastic cleaner/polish that is useable on all plastics. It works pretty well, though I don't care for aerosol sprays... Also *sigh* a new sticker for the mud flap "YES IT GOES FAST -- NO YOU CAN'T RIDE IT!" I couldn't help myself... I went shopping for a new bottle holder too. I found one for bicycles at Dick's Sporting goods for \$5. It was already black! I went to Home Depot to find a way to mount my camera easily. They couldn't find their asses there, but I just bought a couple flat shelf brackets which when cut down with the Dremmel and painted black would work for just about anything. I used one to mount the drink holder to my farkle bar, and saved the other. The camera I mounted to the same arm which holds the GPS/Aqua-box.

My friend Jeremy (who is going to help me the next day with the maintenance) has done some work on his bike. He needs to go test it and calls to see if I want to join him. He has an awesome route, but we don't get out of town until about 8pm. Not usually a big deal. I pass him once and pull over to change my sunglasses to regular... We hit the twisties, and it seems to me very scenic and fun, but one problem...miles of twisty paved road where everybody's gravel drive dumps out into the street!! I had a couple "oh sh*t" moments, but only felt the rear wheel slip a little once. Fairfield Kentucky smells like feet... In Bloomfield we stopped for gas. Jeremy was pushing his bike up towards mine to make room for someone to use his pump and this very belligerent guy says "that thing sure runs quiet".



We say nothing, J. just smiles at him. Then when Jeremy goes in to pay, the guy says (while putting \$80 into his big truck) "Don't you wish gas was a quarter a gallon?" He had a real smartass tone...so I told him I wouldn't be too bothered if it went back up to \$4. You could see this p*ssed him off. He said "You wouldn't rather pay a quarter for a gallon of gas?" Again I told him it didn't make much difference to me at 65 miles per gallon (an exaggeration...I have been getting around 52mpg and slowly climbing). This really sent him over the edge, but I'm thinking nobody has a gun to his friggin head. He was the only person in his big new 4X4 truck with necessary aux tank. He could have done a lot better for himself and our environment. I just told him have a great day and went in to pay my bill.

J. and I agreed that early would work best due to the heat, so we met up and started on the tune-up that Lois needed. It was really cool to have someone so mechanically oriented and knowledgeable to advise me for the first time. Also someone who can judge the proper torc with his bare hands, Jeremy is really cool especially for his age. My Uncle Red who is in his 70's is the only guy I know who can do stuff like that successfully... Uncle Red had been known to place his ear to a good solid pine 2X4 and place

that against the engine block so he could diagnose internal engine problems. At least that is how the story goes! I bet given time, Jeremy will be just as wicked as that. He's already on his way... Got the stuff done just as it started to rain. Work sucked up Jeremy's time so I went home and worked on my farkle bar. I removed it, and then added the camera and drink mount. I got the paint done (flat black) and it seems to be ok, but I'm waiting for dry weather to put it back on.

I probably put 200 miles on this weekend just screwing around. It was fun (except for the leg cramps I've been having!) and then today makes up for it. I had to cage it to work because it was raining. By the time I got here it had cleared up some and began to dry. Now I'm grumpy.

June 26th: Launch Point: Dead Scootopia

Jeremy decided to meet at Scootopia's old lot for our Gasoline Rally gathering point. I got there a little later than I had planned, and there was already one person there. His name was Steve. He had a yellow Vespa, blue hair, and had ridden up from Tennessee! He found us out on some board or another and just showed up to ride up with us. That was really cool. The rest showed up shortly thereafter: Joan (who has been to all three rallies I've been to), Jeremy, and also Steve (our local Steve) and his wife Jan. Steve just got a new Burg4. Jan and Steve also got matching pin stripes on their scooter. Joan is really cool--she has ridden motorcycles for years and has a ton of riding experience. Steve and Jan are good people, and have been married a long time. I like hanging out with them sometimes just to watch how they treat each other. It's really adorable. Except for New Steve, I've known everyone here for over a year, and ridden some really good miles with them, so I'm very happy about the ride up.



We saddle up to go, and Jeremy's SR50 is giving him a few fits, sort of like the test night. I am thinking the problem is all the stop and go. He has worked the bike into a real technological marvel, but towards performance on the high end of things. The thing runs like a scalded cat once you get it up to top speed--and can hold there all day if needed. Once we get out of town though, its problem is not 100% cured. We stop in Indiana to pick up Nathan who rides a Honda Big Ruckus. This thing looks like something



from the set of M*A*S*H! It's all flat black and army green...really a cool machine. At Nathan's, Jeremy gets out the tools and changes his plug. This has his SR50 running much better. We hit the trails in Indiana. Some of them ARE trails...gravel ones. It really wasn't that bad as some might have you think. I look at gravel as something to avoid if possible, but if it's necessary...it can only broaden my experience and I am all for it. I always start slow and easy until I get comfortable, then speed up. I was lucky to have stayed in the back. To me, it's like a wild animal....just...make....no....sudden....moves...

We got to Story, Indiana at lunchtime. There is the Story Inn in Story, IN (cracks me up!) and as far as I could see, that is the ONLY thing there. Seems like it might be a hotspot of the town. We decide this is ok for lunch. I get inside and see the menu and it's the kind of place I hate...home of the \$12 hamburger. Ah well, it's the only place around, but to make up for it I have awesome company and we've been on some really kick-ass roads thanks to Jeremy and his hours of planning. And yes...I even mean WITH the gravel. Jeremy goes out to fiddle with the SR50 and I went back out to get my glasses (had my sunglasses on). I give him a hand with the fine tuning, telling him what his gauge is reading. It seems like it will be easier for him to read the gauge while I twist the throttle on the SR50, so we switch. That was cool...always wanted to do that for some reason...



We go back inside, eat, talk, etc. Afterwards we get the shot in front of the place. The lady who is at the register is kind enough to take our picture then tells us "you need to move your motorcycles before the lady across the street calls the police" so we head out. Now I would not have you believe the rest of the ride was uneventful. Some of the roads were amazingly beautiful, it gave me a sense of belonging to be out with these few friends on a perfect day (though a little hot) and riding toward a cool event. I'm getting to know New Steve a little and Nathan more so--since he is so outgoing. Both seem like really good guys, though Nathan has a tendency to threaten me with a knife for some reason... We get up to Indianapolis and I veer off for my hotel room. I think I'm the first to do so. I will admit from last year, it's more fun to be near all your friends, but I was on a budget so used Priceline and got a deal. Pretty much just a clean safe Motel 6 to sleep is all I needed. I was satisfied. I did note that one back worked loose from its bungee and was dragging the ground when I pulled in!!!

I checked in to the room and chilled out. I was also waiting for my friend Kat who was joining me for the weekend. She had never been to a scooter rally before, and I had never ridden with a passenger, so it was a little experimental for both of us.

June 26th: Meet & Greet at The Monkey's Tail



Kat and I headed over to the Meet & Greet early...I wanted to make sure I got the correct size of shirt. They were passing out the rally packs and stick-on mustaches for the themed Mustache Ride at 10pm. It was nice to see the folks I had ridden up with again, talk to lots of new folks and just scope out all the cool scoots. Jeremy and Nathan were already there when we arrived getting hydrated from the dusty ride up. We joined them. Later it was decided to go grab something to eat. We went for a short walk. Kat used to live in Indianapolis, so knew the area and she said she thought there was a Buffalo Wild Wings close. There was, and we went in. This is when I found out Nathan likes to take surprise camera shots to get weird facial expressions from people. We all gave it a try and I kept trying to get some good ones. I did get a few, but you end up deleting a lot of crap shots. Also you have to have the timing right.



After dinner there was lots of tire kicking and then at 10pm The Mustache Ride. It was every bit as cool as last year! Kat and I followed along for most of it, and then peeled off to call it a night. 8am comes pretty early and there was no way in hell I was taking a chance at missing my opportunity to run the Indy 500 track!

June 27th: Saturday Morning—The Big Show!

This was the deal I had been waiting a year for! We got over to Speed City Scooters a little after 8:30 and there were few people there. They had a pretty substantial cold breakfast of doughnuts, bagels, cereal bars, fruit and then water, coffee, and juice--oh and NOS energy drinks (one of the sponsors). I hung out with Kat as it was really nice to get re-acquainted after the proverbial "all these years". Steve and Jan showed up, and then shortly after came Joan. It was getting close to ride-out time but no



Nathan... AND NO JEREMY!! I tried calling and no answer but he texted me back that he would be there soon. I was afraid I would have to go find him. There was no way in hell either of us were going to miss this!! I wasn't quite panicking, but I was anxious to make sure Jeremy got there. Finally he and Nathan show up, have some minor work to do on their scoots. We

all got ready and I was able to talk to a couple folks. One was David Hempy from Lexington who'd like to join up with us Louisville folks for a ride some time.

Another was Jeremy from Enviromoto in Indianapolis. I had spoken with him numerous times online and it was nice to shake his hand. Lastly I hung around the Burgman 650 that had the Iron Butt license plate--the only other IBA'r there that I saw. This was Mike Hopper from Terre Haute, also a member of the Motorcycle Tourer's Forum. His Burgman had a tow-pac kit on it which looked cool. He told me he had done several IBA cert rides, but never on a scooter. I was a little disappointed.. ;)



It was time, they gave us the rules and Kat and I saddled up to motor out. The ride up to the speedway was short and they had us pose in front of the main entrance for a huge group picture. I wanted some good pictures myself, so I gave her my camera and she did a great job. The set speed limit was supposed to be 35mph. I don't know how anybody could keep it at 35. I didn't and there were some who did, and



also some passing me at what had to be closer to 75 or 80. It was a real thrill. It meant a lot to me because I had come so close last year and fallen short of this ride. Afterwards they got us out of city proper and into more rural areas. That too was very good. We had a couple incidents but riders and machines fared well. At the first stop I had to get gas. The line for the bathroom was a lot longer than the one for gas!!! After a short break, we got back out on the road and ended at the local Motorcycle club house. Everyone was nice and helpful. Kat and I stayed to eat a bite and see Jeremy attempt the slow race. The

slow race, conducted in grass pits bike and rider against others in a handling contest. As the name implies, the LAST one across the finish line is the winner. It was cool to watch, but I had been out in the sun for two days and was about wiped out. Kat and I decided to take a break before the thing at Radio Radio that started at 6pm.



June 27th: Saturday Evening Raffle & Party at Radio Radio

Radio Radio seems like a pretty cool place. Kat and I got inside and I saw the swag I had been missing all weekend---they had coozies!!! I snagged a couple and then we went out back for the grill. Food came with rally registration. Kat and I both opted for the pork tenderloin...which was dipped in this Tahitian sauce. The sauce was the best part!!! They also had smoked sausages and brats. I came back later for a brat... We got settled in and Joan arrived. Shortly after came Steve and Jan.



It really doesn't get any better than this. Steve and Jan sat with Kat and I and we had good conversation. Jeremy and Nathan came in later, and I saw New Steve also. The bartender whose blond hair you could never mistake for someone else--she had ridden in the rally with us!! I got a Flat Tire ale, and did some people watching and talking to my friends. Shortly a person came up to me. He or she was older and dressed in an evening gown with pearls (I believe they had pearls). Not only did this person do trick with a scarf and a finger guillotine, but also was very funny and turned out to be the MC for the evening! Very unique personality. Kat took my picture with him....er....um....her....

The music started and was really good, but they kept playing Elvis of which I'm not fond, but can deal with. Quadraphenia was playing on the screens. After one song they segued into some Led Zepplin. Steve asked me if I knew the song...I knew it was Zepplin but couldn't remember the name "Black Dog". I think he should call his scooter that!! After the first set they did the drawings and raffles. I didn't win anything but Jeremy and Jan did. Also Jeremy got his Uggo award. I don't think his scooter looked that bad even with the mud!



Now it was pretty late and again...I was beat. I heard the second band starting up as I put on my helmet and got Kat up on the scoot to go. We called it a night--not early, just not too late. Tooled around Indy and the roads that Tomtom directed me on were total crap. Like speed bumps every 20 feet!!! I noted a lot of roads in Indy were like this... Made it back to the room safe and sound. ETD for the morning was 10am.

June 28th: Departure - No Nathan, no New Steve

I accidentally overslept. I woke when Jeremy texted me at 9am to see if we could leave early because he was tired of watching television. I got to Metro Scoot around 10:30am. Kat was nice enough to put my luggage in her trunk. She had to come thru Louisville on the way home, so that was nice. The ride back was just 5 scoots. Jeremy led the route again with me, Joan, Steve and Jan. Getting out of town sucked...the roads are bad and I thought I might need dental work before too much more! Nate had left early to get on the interstate home. At first I was wishing I had joined him, but 1 hour into Jeremy's route home and I was hooked. I would like to say there was no gravel but I cannot. What I can say is there was no gravel ROADS. We went on a couple of places where there were huge patches of torn up pavement with gravel in them. The route was pretty much flawless as you can get. Jeremy puts a lot of time and effort into his planning, and it shows. We got close to Story, IN again and I was racing around a curve trying to keep up with Jeremy on his SR50...well, I got too close to the edge! There was about 5 inches of pavement past the white line, then about 5 more inches of grass after that--then the huge nasty ditch in a straight drop!! I slowed, braked a little and leaned in just in the nick of time... Later Joan told me grass and gravel were flying out from under my back wheel---apparently it was a little worse than it actually felt at the time. I was really lucky.



We pulled up at the stop and Jeremy asked if we wanted to go back to the Story Inn. I pointed to the road out of town and we left as quickly as we came in. We finally did stop for gas and Mc Donald's in a small burg that starts with a B.... The rest of the way home was fairly mundane, but it was still really nice to be riding with friends. At Sellersburg I opted to get on the interstate. I waved bye to everyone and shot out for home. I worried that Kat might get there with my luggage and be waiting around. All in all, it was a super weekend. You can see the pictures here if you want:

<http://picasaweb.google.com/the1weasel/GasolineRally2009#>